Nova Scotia Exports Entrepreneurship Program to Sweden

Department of Education

News Releases

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Nova Scotia is exporting its expertise in entrepreneurship education and development. Under a three-year agreement recently signed with Sweden, four Open for Business centres will be opening in two provinces in Sweden this fall. And there's the potential for 16 more to follow during the duration of the agreement.

A group of Swedes is visiting Halifax this week for Open for Business training and orientation. A reception was held today at the Open for Business centre in Halifax to celebrate the rollout of the centres in Sweden. Once the participants complete several levels of training, they will return to Sweden to prepare for the openings of their own Open for Business centres this fall.

Created by the Nova Scotia Department of Education's Centre for Entrepreneurship Education and Development (CEED), Open for Business is a youth-friendly and community-driven storefront drop-in centre for new and aspiring entrepreneurs to access information and resources for their personal and business growth.

"The contract with Sweden is a story of entrepreneurial success within government," said Education Minister Jane Purves. "This agreement brings momentum to CEED's initiatives to export its programs, resource materials, professional development and consulting services."

Over the past four years, CEED has worked with the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Nova Scotia Economic Development, Human Resources Development Canada and community organizations across Nova Scotia to establish a network of eight Open for Business locations from Yarmouth to Sydney.

Last year more than 45,500 individuals were introduced to entrepreneurship through the Open for Business network in Nova Scotia, both at centres and in community outreach programs such as school visits. This resulted in 211 full-time and 51 part-time jobs and more than 2,800 solid referrals to other business support and entrepreneurship-related agencies.

"Serious interest is also taking place in a number of communities across Atlantic Canada and Western Canada," said Ms. Purves. "The concept and proven success of the Open for Business network in Nova Scotia has drawn a great deal of interest from community development agencies around the world."

This first international licensing agreement is with the National

Board for Industrial and Technical Development in Sweden. An earlier group of 20 Swedes trained in Halifax in May, and 10 have returned for more extensive training. The agreement has the potential to create a network of up to 21 Swedish Open for Business centres that could earn CEED more than $200,000 annually.

The centres will follow the model developed in Nova Scotia and use the manuals, training methods and programs developed here. CEED will be paid for a national licensing fee, annual network fees for each location opened and professional development for the staff of each site. The international network of Open for Business centres will be supported by a new website, www.ofbnetwork.com, which provides information and support to young entrepreneurs and staff.

The income generated from sales outside the province will enable CEED to continue to expand its range of programs and services directed to the creation of an entrepreneurial culture in schools and communities in Nova Scotia and throughout the Open for Business network.

CEED is a joint venture funded by the Nova Scotia Department of Education and the Canada/Nova Scotia COOPERATION Agreement on Economic Diversification, which is managed by Nova Scotia Economic Development and Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency. CEED has also established funding partner relationships with the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services and Human Resources Development Canada and strategic partnerships with the Royal Bank Financial Group, CBC-TV and Atlantic Progress magazine. Working toward a common goal of a dynamic entrepreneurial culture, CEED and its partners are creating entrepreneurship programs that are earning international acclaim.

FOR BROADCAST USE:

A Nova Scotia education program is practising what it preaches.

The Centre for Entrepreneurship Education and Development is exporting a youth business model to Sweden.

The model creates Open for Business centres, which allow new and aspiring entrepreneurs to drop-in and access information and resources at storefront locations.

Nova Scotia already has eight business centres, and Sweden may open as many as 21 over the next three years.

The agreement could be worth up to 200-thousand dollars a year to CEED.

CEED was created by Nova Scotia's Department of Education.

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